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Hypocrisy, Obama-Style

By Brian Cloughley
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That 1776 Declaration of Independence from Britain's King George by the United States of America has been echoed by many US Presidents, and Mr Obama reiterated the sentiments by saying that "We believe in human dignity — that every person is created equal." He also said in Europe last year that "we believe in democracy — with elections that are free and fair; and independent judiciaries and opposition parties; civil society and uncensored information."

The Declaration is an inspiring document. If the world had embraced its tenets we would be living in paradise. But mankind is a defective species and the Earth is now a place which generations of humans have allowed and even encouraged to become a confrontational swamp infested by malevolent unprincipled savages whose justification for their brutal actions rests in noisily-claimed belief in a supreme spiritual being of the Islamic persuasion.

Opposing the barbarians of the so-called "Islamic State" stands most of the world, including a group of countries whose justification for their actions also rests in avowed belief in a divinity. These opponents of the fanatics of Islamic State are the religion-based dictatorial monarchies of the Persian Gulf whose immense riches stem from the geological accident that underneath their lands lie vast quantities of oil and gas without which the world would fall into even greater turmoil.

The rulers of these countries are born of dynasties in which enormous wealth and supreme power are not earned by toil or even achieved by war. They are in no way accountable to their subjects, but in some fashion are held to be answerable to the same divine being who is used by Islamic

fascists to justify their brutality. The emirs, kings and sultans of Arabia regard religion as a tool — indeed a weapon — with which they can ensure that their vassals remain subservient.

There is no possibility that the peoples of these countries could enjoy liberty in anything approaching the manner enjoyed by citizens of the United States whose Independence Declaration rightly holds that “whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends [such as ‘Liberty’], it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government . . .”

But there is no support in Washington for alteration or abolition of the Gulf’s absolute Monarchs who deny Liberty to their feudal serfs.

The US State Department records that Saudi Arabia’s “citizens lack the right and legal means to change their government” while there are “pervasive restrictions on universal rights such as freedom of expression . . . freedom of assembly, association, movement, and religion; and a lack of equal rights for women . . .” It is barely credible in the year 2015 that “[Saudi] women under the age of 45 . . . require a male guardian’s consent to travel abroad” and are forbidden to drive a car in their own country.

The State Department begins its observations on Human rights in Saudi Arabia by observing that “The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a monarchy ruled by [the] King . . . who is both head of state and head of government. The government bases its legitimacy on its interpretation of sharia (Islamic law) and the 1992 Basic Law, which specifies that the rulers of the country shall be male descendants of the founder.”

In Saudi Arabia it is illegal to publicly practise any religion other than Islam. There isn’t a single Christian church or synagogue or Buddhist temple or any other non-Islamic place of worship in the entire Kingdom.

President Obama declared on January 15, 2015 that “promoting religious freedom has always been a key objective of my Administration’s foreign policy” — but he is selective about achieving that admirable goal because his own State Department is precise in pronouncing that “freedom of religion is neither recognized nor protected under the law” in Saudi Arabia. Ten days after his pious declaration Mr Obama was in India when news came of the death of Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah. So Mr Obama instantly cut short his visit and rushed to Riyadh and was cordially greeted by the new unelected monarch with whom the democratically-elected President “held an hour-long meeting in which they discussed a range of issues including the campaign against Islamic State.”

The “range of issues” did not include freedom of religion, which is not supported by the savages of Islamic State anymore than it is by that loyal ally of the United States, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whose government is noted by the State Department as indulging in “torture and other abuses.”

Saudi Arabia and Islamic State regard Islamic Law as fundamental and both carry out ritual beheading in the name of religion. The State Department notes that in Saudi Arabia “several

individuals [were executed] during the year for crimes such as . . . sorcery.” They both punish people by copping their hands off in public

In November last year the UK’s *Guardian* reported that “the American ambassador in Beirut said he was deeply concerned about the “paralysis of Lebanon’s political institutions” and called for new elections to be held as soon as possible. This prompted a wry comment from the blogger known as the Angry Arab that “I would like the US ambassador in Saudi Arabia to call for elections ‘as soon as possible’.”

There could be no answer from Washington to that observation (which would merit a thousand lashes for Mr Angry Arab were he so ill-advised as to go to Saudi Arabia) — anymore than there is justification for President Obama’s selective stance on gay and transgender policies around the world.

A year ago Mr Obama declared that “We believe in human dignity, that every person is created equal” which was an admirable announcement of principle. And when he was interviewed on NBC’s *Tonight Show* about Russia he declared that “I’ve been very clear that when you are discriminating on the basis of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, you are violating the basic morality that I think should transcend every country. And I have no patience for countries that try to treat gays or lesbians or transgender persons in ways that intimidate them or are harmful to them.”

But Mr Obama’s patience seems to extend indefinitely to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in which, as his State Department notes “under sharia [law] as interpreted in the country, consensual same-sex sexual conduct is punishable by death or flogging, depending on the perceived seriousness of the case.” For example, “the Medina Criminal Court sentenced a 24-year old man to three years in prison and 450 lashes for soliciting sex with other men using Twitter.” But Mr Obama didn’t appear on the *Tonight Show* to criticize Saudi Arabia for “discriminating on the basis of . . . sexual orientation,” or to encourage King Salman to have “elections that are free and fair.”

There’s a word for his performance. Plainly and simply, Mr Obama is a hypocrite.